Nova Scotia
Celtic Connections in the New World

Study Leader: David Allen Lambert

September 19–23, 2021 | Canada

Prince Edward Island Optional Extension
September 23-26, 2021
LEADERSHIP OF DAVID ALLEN LAMBERT, CHIEF GENEALOGIST

David Allen Lambert has been on the staff of NEHGS since 1993 and is the organization’s Chief Genealogist. David is an internationally recognized speaker on the topics of genealogy and history. His genealogical expertise includes New England and Atlantic Canadian records of the 17th through 21st centuries; military records; DNA research; and Native American and African American genealogical research in New England. Lambert has published many articles in the New England Historical and Genealogical Register, the New Hampshire Genealogical Record, Rhode Island Roots, The Mayflower Descendant, and American Ancestors magazine. He has also published A Guide to Massachusetts Cemeteries (NEHGS, 2018). David is an elected Fellow of the Massachusetts Historical Society in Boston, Mass., and a life member of the New Hampshire Society of the Cincinnati, and the Massachusetts Sons of the Revolution. He is also the tribal genealogist for the Massachuset-Punkapoag Indians of Massachusetts.

CABOT LINKS RESORT, INVERNESS

Perfectly located between the picturesque coast of Cape Breton and the charming town of Inverness, the four-star Cabot Links Resort is a timeless and award-winning locale where guests are sure to relax. Lodge guestrooms incorporate natural cedar wood and white marble to create a uniquely rustic and modern aesthetic, the epitome of laid-back luxury. Guests will enjoy sweeping views of the ocean or rolling green links from the comfort of their rooms. Dine at one of two on-site restaurants or enjoy a cocktail while basking in glorious views of the Gulf of St. Lawrence.

THE PRINCE GEORGE HOTEL, HALIFAX

The stylish, four-diamond Prince George Hotel in the heart of Halifax is the perfect base for an exploration of the Nova Scotian town and surrounds. Newly enlarged, modern guestrooms feature fine linens and sleek, sophisticated décor. Guests are only steps from the city’s finest shops, as well as the historic waterfront, Public Gardens, and Neptune Theatre—one of the oldest professional theater companies in Canada. If you’re in the mood for fine dining, look no further than Gio Restaurant located on the ground floor. Innovative cuisine meets warm wood interiors for an inviting, worthwhile experience.

ITINERARY

Sunday, September 19
Arrival & Inverness

Arrive at the Halifax Stanfield International Airport in the early afternoon and board a group transfer to the Cabot Links Resort, just over three hours away. Along the way, visit the Glenora Inn and Distillery, North America’s first single malt whiskey distillery. In the early 1800s, Scottish immigrants introduced their own whiskey-making process to Cape Breton and nearly 200 years later, the process
is largely unchanged at Glenora. Following a guided tour, enjoy a sampling of the distillery’s products. Check into the **Cabot Links Resort** before gathering this evening for a cocktail reception, followed by a welcome dinner celebrating the group’s arrival in Nova Scotia.

**Monday, September 20**  
**Cape Breton**

This morning, depart for the **Gaelic College** on the west coast of Cape Breton Island. The college, dedicated to the promotion and preservation of traditional Gaelic culture, features cultural demonstrations, from kilt making to Gaelic storytelling. Visit the nearby **Alexander Graham Bell National Historic Site**, a museum focused on the Scottish-born inventor, which features models of his work, along with mementos and interactive exhibits. Partake in an optional, **guided nature walk** along the site’s picturesque grounds jutting out over Baddeck Bay, or enjoy free time to explore the museum at your own pace. Pause for a group lunch alongside the Baddeck Harbor with great views of the Kidston Island Lighthouses. Later this afternoon, tour the **Highland Village Museum** overlooking the glistening Bras d’Or Lake. The property encompasses eleven historic buildings, all staffed by guides wearing period dress and depicting life for Gaelic settlers from the mid-18th century through the early-20th century. Return to Cabot Links for downtime before heading out to **The Red Shoe**, the lively pub established by world-renowned singers Heather, Cookie, and Raylene Rankin in 2005. This evening is made merrier by live music and a delicious meal of Nova Scotia home cooking.

**Tuesday, September 21**  
**Antigonish, Pictou & Halifax**

This morning, check out of the Cabot Links Resort and head southwest towards Halifax along the scenic **Ceilidh Trail**. Pause first in the sleepy town of Judique to meet with historians and experts at the **Celtic Music Interpretive Center**. Experience the interactive exhibits, which feature Celtic memorabilia from Cape Breton through the ages, followed by a special **fiddle performance** just for our group. Continue through the town of **Antigonish** (which hosts its own Highland Games each year!) and stop for a group lunch nearby. Land in **Pictou**, dubbed “the Birthplace of New Scotland,” where emigrants from the northwestern coast of Scotland arrived in 1773 to establish their new community. The town’s most prominent feature is the **Hector Heritage Quay**, home of the full-sized replica of the ship Hector upon which the Scottish emigrants arrived. We reach **The Prince George Hotel** in Halifax early this evening. Gather for a cocktail reception, after which you are free to enjoy dinner on your own.
Wednesday, September 22
Halifax

The morning begins with a guided tour of the Halifax Citadel National Historic Site which stands proudly above our hotel and looks out across the Halifax Harbor. Since Halifax was founded by the English in 1749, four iterations of the fortress have been constructed on Citadel Hill. The most recent structure is a concrete star fort, today restored to its original Victorian-era glory. We’ll enjoy a guided walking tour through the historic city center, first visiting the Old Town Clock, which sits at the base of Citadel Hill. Other notable stops include: St. Mary’s Cathedral Basilica, the Gothic Revival Catholic cathedral that boasts the tallest granite spire in North America; St. Paul’s Anglican Church, built in the 1750s and the oldest surviving Protestant church in Canada (and the oldest building in Halifax); and Halifax City Hall, designed by Canadian architect Edward Elliot in the 1880s. Before lunch, visit the Canadian Museum of Immigration at Pier 21, the National Historic Site which was the gateway to Canada for one million immigrants between 1928 and 1971. Next, visit the Maritime Museum of the Atlantic, Canada’s oldest and largest maritime museum with a collection of over 24,000 artifacts spanning nearly 200 years of history, including a permanent exhibit on the RMS Titanic. This evening, gather for one final dinner marking the end of this cultural voyage through Nova Scotia.

Thursday, September 23
Departure

Board a private group transfer to the Halifax Stanfield International Airport to meet departing flights or continue to the Prince Edward Island optional extension (see below for further information).
THE GREAT GEORGE, CHARLOTTETOWN

Along a tree-lined street in the center of Charlottetown, PEI, sits the historic Great George hotel. Spanning seventeen buildings that date back to 1846, the Great George is a beautifully preserved piece of history with modern comforts of the 21st century. Light-filled guest rooms feature charming period touches, from wingback chairs to brocade draperies. Although the hotel itself does not feature on-site dining, it is situated at the heart of Charlottetown’s growing food scene and hotel staff can recommend a local seafood spot or pub down by the Harbor.

ITINERARY

Thursday, September 23
Victoria & Charlottetown

Depart from Halifax and drive to Prince Edward Island, just over three hours away. After crossing onto the island, stop in the charming historic seaport of Victoria for a group lunch featuring PEI’s famous oysters. Continue to Charlottetown, Prince Edward Island’s capital city, and check into The Great George, our home base for the next three nights. Later this afternoon, join a guided walking tour of historic Charlottetown. Experience the soaring interiors of St. Dunstan’s Basilica Cathedral, the French Gothic church designated a National Historic Site of Canada since 1990. Pass by important government buildings, from Province House, the Greek Revival seat of the Legislative Assembly of P.E.I. (and Canada’s second-oldest seat of government) to the contrasting Romanesque Revival Charlottetown City Hall. Pause to admire the sprawling Government House, residence of P.E.I.’s Lieutenant Governor, the Honorable Antoinette Perry. The final stop is Beaconsfield Historic House, one of the area’s most graceful residences, where our expert guide leads us on a tour of this enduring symbol of Victorian elegance. Explore the beautifully preserved interiors and collection of period furnishings. The evening concludes with dinner at a cozy restaurant within walking distance of the hotel.

Friday, September 24
Tracadie & Summerside

The day starts with an early drive to Glenaladale, a sprawling, historic estate overlooking Tracadie Bay. The land was settled by First Nations peoples and Acadians until 1772, when Captain John MacDonald brought the first Scottish Catholic settlers to what was then St. John’s Island. The estate became Captain MacDonald’s home and the home of his
descendants until the early 1900s. Today, the Glenaladale Heritage Trust is regenerating the site and creating a community space where visitors and islanders alike can discover the land’s storied past. Enjoy a group lunch in Summerside before a stroll through the quaint residential streets lined with early 19th-century homes. Arrive at the MacNaught History Centre and Archives to view archival documents, from P.E.I. newspapers on microfilm to transcribed census and gravestone records, among other valuable resources tracing the history of Island residents. Before returning to Charlottetown, visit the College of Piping and Celtic Performing Arts of Canada in Summerside. The College seeks to maintain the rich musical tradition of Scottish and Irish settlers who fled to Prince Edward Island after the Highland Clearances and Irish “Troubles.” Learn more about the College’s mission and delight in a musical performance by current students. Return to Charlottetown for an independent evening and dinner.

Saturday, September 25
Belfast, Orwell & Charlottetown

This morning, we drive along the Hillsborough Bay to Belfast, site of the Belfast Historical Society and Selkirk Scottish Heritage Centre. In 1803, displaced Scottish crofters landed in Belfast with Lord Selkirk, the Scottish philanthropist who sponsored several immigrant settlements in Canada, and developed one of the most productive farming districts in the colony. Today, the Heritage Centre and its replica Croft House seek to promote and encourage interest in the region’s history through exhibits, research, and cultural events. Later, visit the Sir Andrew Macphail Homestead, originally built in 1856 and purchased by the Macphail family in 1864 as their family farmhouse. Andrew, descendant of Scottish emigrant father William Macphail, spent much of his adult life on the Homestead, despite actively teaching at McGill in Montreal (where he became the first professor to teach the history of medicine). The Sir Andrew Macphail Foundation serves to celebrate and continue the legacy of its namesake through the preservation and restoration of the historic home. Enjoy lunch at the homestead before returning to Charlottetown for a free afternoon. Gather in the early evening for drinks and live music before a lobster dinner celebrating the official end of this journey through Nova Scotia and Prince Edward Island.

Sunday, September 26
Departure

Board a private transfer to the Halifax Stanfield International Airport to meet departing flights.